

The GROUNDS of the PROPOSALS of the CORPORATION of PIN-MAKERS London,

For a Confirmation of *their* Contract



He Corporation of the *Pin-makers* of the City of London, are a Company first Incorporated by Charter of King *James*, confirmed and enlarged by King *Charles* the First, and now again by Letters Patents of His Majesty that now is. And into the Membership, Regulation and Government of this Company, are all the *Pin-makers* in *England* and *Wales* incorporated.

This Company consists for the most part of a sort of poor and indigent people, who have neither credit nor money to purchase Wyre of the Merchant at the best hand, but are forced for want thereof, to buy only small parcels from hand to mouth of the second or third Buyer, as they have occasion to use it, and to sell off the Pins they make of the same from week to week as soon as they are made for Ready money, to feed themselves, their Wives and Children, whom they are fain to imploy to go up and down every Saturday night from shop to shop to offer their Pins to sale, or otherwise cannot have money to buy Bread.

And these are daily so exceedingly multiplied and increased, by reason of the unlimited number of Apprentices that some covetous minded Members of the Company (who have considerable Stocks) do constantly imploy and keep, ^{that they} are not able to live one by another when they come out of their Times. Besides that they are exceedingly prejudiced in their Trade, and undersold by the Importation of Foreign Pins from beyond the Seas, which are daily exposed and put to sale here under the *English* mark, to the great abuse of the Kings liege people, the same being slight and unserviceable, and at the best far worse then those of *English* making.

The persons that Buy the Pins from the Maker to sell again to other Retailing Shop-keepers, taking advantage of this necessity of the poor Workmen (who are always constrained to sell for Ready money, or otherwise cannot subsist) have by degrees so beaten down the price of Pins that the Workman is not able to live of his work, and make serviceable Wares; and divers of them have been forced to sell their Pins for less than the Wyre cost them: whereupon many have been constrained to give over their Trades, and betake themselves to be Porters, Tankard-bearers, and other Day-labourers, who formerly lived very well, and many of their Children do daily become Parish Charges.

And those who continue are constrained to make Pins of weak, insufficient and defective Wyre, or otherwise they must sell at loss. The richer sort, who are but few, and perhaps may have some small stock to buy a quantity of Wyre at the best hand, are by this means likewise constrained to give longer time to the first Buyer of their Pins they sell than their stocks will bear; To ballance which inconvenience, they likewise are forced to make their Pins every day worse and worse, and by this means it comes to pass that the Trade decays every day more and more, and the credit and estimation of *English* Pins is lost in Foreign parts, where they were always heretofore wont to outsell those of any other Nation; It being then a considerable Manufacture.

To remedy this inconvenience, and to prevent the total ruine of their Trade, the Company find no other Expedient but to agree with certain persons to raise a Stock for them; which persons to have always during the term of One hundred years Five and twenty or thirty thousand pounds worth of Wyre of all sorts ready laid in at *Pin-makers* Hall London, to furnish as well the poorer as the richer sort at one and the same certain rate, as they shall have occasion to use it. And so much in Ready money as will weekly buy off from the *Pin-makers* hands all the Pins they shall make of that Wyre at one and the same price both to rich and poor.

And the Company to covenant with the said persons to buy and take off from their hands all the Wyre they shall so yearly provide for the term of One hundred years, at a certain profit agreed upon between them, over and above what the said Wyre shall cost, so as the same do not exceed Two hundred and fifty Ton a Year. And to bring to *Pin-makers* Hall, and there weekly sell to the same persons all the Pins they shall make with the same Wyre, at certain reasonable prices agreed upon between them, not exceeding what they were heretofore sold at when the commodity could be afforded to be well and truly made.

And the said persons in Consideration of the profit they are to have upon the Wyre, to covenant with the *Pin-makers* to take off Weekly from the hands of every Member of the said Company, all the Pins he or they shall so make and bring. And not to raise, the price of Pins upon the Shopkeeper or any other His Majesties Subjects above the rates and prizes they were heretofore sold at.

And the sole end of this Agreement is to raise up again the credit, estimation, and goodness of the Commodity both at home and abroad, and to keep themselves from being made a prey to the avarice of others, who eat out all the profit of their labour.

But because the persons they have treated with in this behalf (though fully satisfied by the opinion of Council Learned in the Law, touching the Legality thereof) are yet unwilling to venture upon a Contract wherein so great a Stock is to be concerned, without the Warrant of an Act of Parliament to Justifie the Lawfulness thereof; the *Pin-makers* are therefore Petitioners to the Honorable House of Commons for a Declaratory Act in that behalf.

And that for encouragement of so considerable an *English* Manufacture, all Foreign Pins may be prohibited to be Imported, and *English* made Pins permitted to be Exported Custom Free. In recompense of which Loss to His Majesty it shall be part of their Contract with the said persons, that they shall allow to the Kings Majestie, His Heirs and Successors the Summe of One thousand pounds per Annum out of the profits of the Contract, during the whole term of a Hundred years, which they are informed is more by above three fourths than ever the Custom of Pins formerly made.

And to stop the unreasonable increase and multiplying of *Pin-makers* who have little or no stocks, and are already hardly able to live one by another; they are likewise Petitioners, That no *Pin-maker* may be permitted to keep above Three Apprentices at a time, and those not for less than Seven years by Indenture bound; As in the Trade of Felt-making is already Enacted by Parliament in the First year of King *James* his Reign.

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